Appendix VI.

[Vide answer to starred question No. 659 asked by Sri M. Jagannathan at the meeting of the Legislative Assembly held on 30th September 1958, page 1040 supra.]

Recommendations of the Bombay Scavengers Living Conditions Enquiry Committee.

Recommendations.

(1) It may be noted with interest that latrines with receptacles which are generally removed by scavengers came into vogue only after the establishment of Municipalities during the British regime.

(2) The caste of Bhangi as such was confined only to certain Provinces like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnatak, etc. It is of a very late origin ancestors of these Bhangis were just field labourers of a low caste but never did the work of scavenging. Some of these people took to the dirty work of cleansing the latrines for the sake of profit. Slowly this developed into a monopoly. The stage was reached when the Bhangis wanted to exploit this monopoly and a sort of customary right was thus developed. By force of habit the Bhangi lost his self-respect to such an extent that he did not consider the dirty work of cleansing latrines as a curse from which he should endeavour to extricate himself.

Remarks—Views of this Government.

(1) & (2) This Government have no remarks to offer in the matter.

(3) The Committee are strongly of the opinion that the Gharaki system or the system of customary right of scavenging should be abolished both in the interest of the Bhangis and also in the interests of public sanitation. The latter reason has arisen because Bhangis who had customary rights had the upper hand over the residents of towns and villages because they would do the cleansing work only as and when they pleased and at the same time they would not allow other scavengers to enter into their sphere of work to carry on the work in case of strikes, etc. This led to a high degree of insanitation in many cases.

(4) The Committee felt that suitable measures should be taken to awaken the sanitary conscience and civic sense of the public in the matter of abolition of the process of removal of night-soil by hand by the Bhangis, and to raise culture of the Bhangis caste and made them fit to take their due share in the public life of the society.

(5) The Committee has pointed out that in certain Muni-cipal Acts there is provision to regulate the construction, naintenance and control of water-closets, privies, latrines, etc., but there is no provision for the scavenging of public atrines. This has prevented the Municipalities from break-ng the so-called customary rights of Bhangis and from mproving the methods of scavenging in order to avoid the and-removal.

(6) Certain Municipal Acts, for instance in Punjab and elhi, actually include provision for the preservation of the istomary rights of scavenging private latrines. These pro-ions should be abrogated. (In this connexion attention

(3) There is no customary right of scavenging prevailing in this State.

(4) The Local Authorities should take necessary action to awaken the civic sense of the public in the matter of aboli-tion of the process of removal of night-soil by hand by the scavengers. Scavenging in this State is done mostly by Harijans. The State Government are already taking measures for the uplift of the Harijans in the educational, social and economic fields.

(5) There is provision under section 145 of the Madras District Municipalities Act for the proper maintenance and cleansing of public latrines.

(6) There is no such provision in the Acts relating to local bodies in this State.

Recommendations.	*Remarks—Views of this Government.*
(may be invited to our proposed legislation to amend the Punjab Municipal Act in order to do away with customary right in the Delhi City.)	
(7) The living conditons of scavengers are very poor. Provision of housing to Bhangis or payment of house rent to such workers who are not provided with free quarters does not find a place in all Municipal Acts. Wherever such provision has not been made the Act should be amended suitably.	(7) & (12) Even though there is no provision in the Madras District Municipalities and the Madras Local Boards Acts to provide quarters or payment of house rent allowance to sanitary workers, the Government have permitted by executive instructions, the Municipal Councils to grant house rent allowance to their sanitary workers who have not been provided with quarters. It will be open to Municipal Councils to provide the sanitary workers with a hut or hutment either free or on nominal rent. As a matter of fact, some of the local authorities have provided quarters for these sanitary workers. House rent allowance is being paid in most of the cases to those for whom quarters have not been provided.
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(12) House rent should be paid to all scavengers who have neither a house of their own or who have not been provided free accommodation by local bodies.	
(8) Provision of water for drinking or washing in the case of scavengers is very inadequate. Even where storage tanks and water taps are provided it has been found that the water-supply is non-existent after certain hours with the result that the scavengers are put to a lot of suffering.	(8), (9) & (11) Necessary arrangements are being made wherever possible in the matter.
(9) The area where scavengers reside do not have any latrines. These have to be provided.	
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(11) There should also be provision for adequate lighting streets and open spaces, for a playground, for a congrega-nal centre, for a reading room, etc. The local bodies should asked to pay due attention to such things in the case of vengers also. Unless these amenities are provided slum arance cannot really be a success.

(10) The quarters and localities for scavengers are often uated in unhealthy places in the vicinity of open drain or mp grounds. This should be remedied. In view of the t that the breaking of monopoly or customary right of vengers will take some time, the question of housing commodation should be tackled immediately by local bodies.

(10) The Government are giving loans to Municipal Councils and Panchayats for the purpose of providing quarters to the sanitary workers employed under them. Many local bodies have availed of the grants and have constructed quarters for their sanitary workers. Hitherto, there has been no complaint that these quarters are situated in unhealthy or insanitary places. In the Second Five-Year Plan, it is proposed to provide Rs. 40 lakhs for the purpose of grant of loans to the local bodies for construction of quarters for their sanitary workers. This scheme will be sanctioned even during the first year of the Plan, if the Government of India's assistance in the form of loan is forthcoming.

(13) The dirtiest feature of scavenging work is the process hand-removal of night-soil which drops down in a chamber ow, where usually a basket or some other receptacle such a pan, a bucket, etc., is placed. The Committee have ommended that such receptacles latrines should be elimi-ed forthwith and substituted by a type of latrines which l not involve hand-removal.

(13) It is very difficult to give effect to this suggestion in crowded towns until underground drainage system is introduced. No action is possible now in this regard.

(14) Local bodies whenever they have occasion to con-ict new latrines should definitely avoid constructing the al pan latrines and should construct septic tanks or other able substitutes. Local bodies should also refuse mission to new house-owners to construct such receptacle ines.

(14) The system of construction of septic tank latrines or other suitable substitutes is even now being followed, whereever possible in this State.

Recommendations.	*Remarks—Views of this Government*
(15) The Committee have also made recommendations as the various types of latrines that can be brought into use order to avoid this hand-removal. They have stated that e practice of carrying the night-soil baskets and drums on e head from the latrines to the night-soil cart or lorry should prohibited. The cart or the lorry should pass along the ad as the work of cleansing latrines proceeds and should ep pace with it. A wheel-barrow to which a drum of suit-le size to carry night-soil with cover should be fixed and e same should be pushed by hand up to the night-soil cart lorry; otherwise the night-soil may be carried in buckets th cover. In the case of cess-pools, a suction pump fitted a lorry should be utilised. If this is not possible the wheel-rrows with a drum or any other device may be adopted.	(15) The system of removal of night-soil in buckets and in wheel-barrow drum carts and lorries is already in vogue in most of the towns in this State. The emptying of cess-pools by suction pump is also being done in a number of towns.
(16) It may be interesting to note that the Committee ve suggested that the night-soil should be used for the pro-ction of gas for street lighting, for fuel, etc. There are s plants already manufactured in the country which can be ed for this purpose. Public latrines should be so constructed at the night-soil, etc., should enter special tanks built for e plant from which gas will be produced and after the s has been yielded the remaining stuff is thrown out at the her end of the tank and would still retain its manurial value. he Committee have recommended that the potentialities of ch gas plants for use in village panchayats should be amined. (In this connexion it may be recalled that r. Thirin Narayanan of the Malaria Institute of India has ready evolved a gas plant for the production of gas from cow-ung and other refuse.)	(16) The gas plants referred to are not economical either for private use or for local bodies. No action is therefore proposed to be taken on this recommendation.

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(17) The Committee have also recommended that five hours of scavenging work should be the maximum for each scavenger. The practice of giving off-days should also be adopted.

(17) The working hours for the sanitary workers are even now being regulated according to the suggestion of the Committee.

(18) Local bodies should provide suitable uniforms or clothng to the scavengers in their employ.

(18) The Government have already commended to the local bodies even as early as 1940, the suggestion regarding the supply of clothing and footwear to their sanitary workers. Many local bodies are implementing this suggestion.

(19) A campaign must be planned by the Public Health \uthorities of States, with the co-operation of local bodies and ocial workers for the purpose of securing improvements in be living condition of the scavengers and generally for the ıplift of scavengers as members of society.

(19) Effective steps for doing propaganda for removal of untouchability among Harijans and further ameliorative measures for the uplift of Harijans, are already being taken in this State. No fresh action is therefore called for in this State in regard to this recommendation.

(20) The Committee have made recommendations in egard to the minimum wages which should be prescribed or scavengers. They have proposed a scale of Rs. 25—½—30 n the case of district municipalities with a selection grade of 5 per cent with a further time-scale of Rs. 5 spread over 0 years and in the case of Notified Area Committees and ram Panchayats a flat rate of Rs. 20 per month. The same cale of allowances as is allowed to Class IV employees of overnment should be given to the scavengers also. In cerain municipalities an allowance called an unclean work allownce is also given. This allowance should be treated as part f the wages of scavengers.

(20) Under the Minimum Wages Act, this Government have fixed Rs. 25 inclusive of allowances as the minimum rate of wage for Sanitary workers employed under local bodies. But in practice, municipal councils are paying to these workers a salary ranging Rs. 25 to 38 including dearness allowance and excluding house rent allowance of Rs. 3 per mensem. These workers are at present treated as contingent establishment and are paid according to the prevailing market rates. It is proposed to take up early, the general question of revising the minimum wages of workers employed under local bodies.

(21) If as a result of improvement in the conditions of vork of the scavengers as mentioned above, some of them re thrown out of employment, it should be the duty of the ocal bodies to see that such persons are absorbed in other uitable kind of employment under their control.

(21) This recommendation has been commended to the local bodies in this State for adoption if possible.

Recommendations.	*Remarks—Views o; this Government.*
(22) Government should appoint an Assistant to each Director of Local Authorities in a State in order to secure the mplementation of the Committee's recommendations.	(22) The Government do not propose to take any action in the matter.
(23) Local bodies, gram panchayats and other local uthorities should include in their annual reports a special hapter giving details about the living conditions and the onditions of work of scavengers and sweepers in their employ nd the improvements effected therein during the year under eview.	(23) The Government have accepted this recommendation. The Inspector of Municipal Councils and Local Boards has been requested to issue instructions to the local bodies to give effect to the recommendation of the Committee by including a suitable chapter in this regard in their annual Administrative Reports in future.
(24) Co-operative Credit Societies should be organised with the help of local bodies for the use of the servants of local odies including scavengers.	(24) Co-operative Credit Societies and Stores are even now being organised for the use of these servants.
(25) Lastly the Committee have recommended that the anitary conscience, civic sense and the sense of social justice of the people in general should be aroused by impressing upon them the importance of public sanitation and improved sanitary arrangements in their own dwellings.	(25) No specific action is called for on this recommendation as the public health staff of this State are already doing propaganda in the matter.

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